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SUBJECT: PEACE, STABILITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH, NOT WAR, ARE
RWANDA'S REAL INTERESTS

REF: A. KINSHASA 0884
[B. KINSHASA 0875](#)
[C. KIGALI 710](#)
[D. 07 KIGALI 0631](#)

Classified By: CDA Cheryl Sim for Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Absent significant ethnic cleansing of Rwandaphone populations in eastern Congo, or a serious attack by the FDLR across the border, the Government of Rwanda (GOR) will likely keep its cool, keep its policy focus on development, and grit its collective teeth as it exchanges allegations of misbehavior with a Congolese government it disdains. Another foray into military adventurism in the Kivus is not on President Kagame's "to do" list -- his vision of Rwanda is as a peaceful entrepot of effective government and a destination for private investment that leads to to ever-greater integration in the East African Community. To reach its long-term development goals, Rwanda needs a Congo that can provide security in the eastern region, govern itself well and make mutually-beneficial deals. However, we agree with our colleagues in Kinshasa (ref B) that multiple efforts must be made by the international community to counsel and insist on peace, and both governments must be brought to see the meritss of cooperation or, at least, a respectful coexistence. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Rwandan officialdom has viewed the rising tide of rumor, accusation and extremist statements emanating from the eastern Congo and senior Congolese officials with alarm, dismay, irritation and finally anger, as it sees itself again and again accused by Congolese officials of stage-managing events it contends are clearly beyond its control. The recent Congolese photographs that purportedly "prove" Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) are supporting Laurent Nkunda have been met with equal amounts of disdain and grim humor (FYI: some of the obvious mistakes in the photos include Rwandan money that has been out of circulation since the genocide; consistent misspellings of "Rwanda Defence Forces"; a military ID card that has mixed English/French and notes blood type as "inconnue" when in fact the RDF has a very thorough blood screening/typing effort related to HIV/AIDS programs; rifles that are not issued to the RDF and/or in terrible condition; and out-of-use documents with dates altered to read 2008. End FYI). Most observers here have commented that if the DRC is going to make the effort to fabricate this alleged "proof," its efforts are woefully amateurish.

[1](#)3. (C) The previous and seemingly growing progress between the two nations, on view as late as the Joint Monitoring

Group Envoys Level meeting in Gisenyi in June of this year, has been replaced by emotional charges and counter-charges. Unfortunately, the only regular dialogue between the two nations has become the sterile and low-level exchanges of the JMG Task Force, where a focus on scoring minor procedural points appears to be the chief past-time. Nevertheless, the Government of Rwanda (GOR) believes it is appropriate for DRC to request MONUC to activate the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) to look into what the DRC contends are Rwandan misdeeds inside the DRC. Special Envoy Richard Sezibera has for months suggested that DRC complaints be directed to the JVM. As for the GOR using the JVM to investigate Rwandan concerns QAs for the GOR using the JVM to investigate Rwandan concerns related to Rwandans who are allegedly missing, detained or reporting abuse in the Goma area, Sezibera told Charge the GOR prefers to try to use bilateral means first (and has exchanged testy diplomatic notes with the DRC on the issue of the missing) before taking the allegation to the JVM. He added, however, there are a number of issues that Rwanda has asked the JVM to look into that have not been addressed.

¶4. (C) Rwanda's chief accusation (in accord with its long-standing complaint, now apparently accepted by many observers -- ref C), is that some elements of the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) co-exist and regularly cooperate with and supply the FDLR. While grudgingly acknowledging the international community's growing recognition of this phenomenon, Rwanda wants more: statements from western governments acknowledging this point; meaningful action to separate the two forces, and effective operations to dismantle the genocidal FDLR. Add to the mix the GOR's long-standing suspicion that MONUC forces assist or ignore FDLR operations, and there is long-simmering anger and

contempt for what the GOR frequently describes as the inept and self-dealing activities of the international presence in the DRC.

¶5. (C) However, notwithstanding its concern about the situation on the ground in eastern Congo and its irritation with the GDRC, the Rwandan government has great policy focus and strict discipline at senior levels, and subordinates do not act without clear authorization from above. President Kagame has determined that the GOR/RDF will not intervene in the Congo, and that remains Rwandan policy. In his recent interview with the Belgian newspaper Le Soir, Kagame disavowed any personal interest in events in the Kivus. This may not be literally true, but his remarks reflect the conscious decision of the Rwandan government to stay on its side of the border. Additionally, Kagame and his senior team are well aware of what their last foray into military intervention in the DRC cost Rwanda on all fronts, and Kagame has a proven track record of learning from his past mistakes.

¶6. (C) Rwanda's immediate future lies to the east (ref D), and the growing integration of the East African Community, with the relatively well-functioning economies of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania as essential elements in an expanding local economy and rising foreign investment. Rwanda ultimately sees itself as a bilingual entrepot between Anglophone East Africa and Francophone Central Africa, and it needs a stable and peaceful Congo if its development needs are to be fully realized. Plans for rail links, a new airport, and a growing financial sector require the nearby resource-rich Congo to be accessible from Rwanda. Rwanda needs a Congo that can stand on its feet and make mutually-beneficial development deals. Continual turmoil in the Kivus is the opposite of what Rwanda wants and needs.

¶7. (C) Two things, however, could affect this policy thrust: a large FDLR incursion, perhaps striking at Rwanda's growing tourist and energy infrastructure along Lake Kivu; or significant ethnic cleansing of Congolese Tutsis. We have seen one late September incursion by a small FDLR force that wounded one and killed another Rwandan, and we have the reports mentioned above of missing Rwandan citizens who apparently crossed into the Kivus on legitimate personal business. These incidents do not of themselves change the

Rwandan policy equation, but escalations of either could bring a very different Rwandan response. We have reports that some FDLR formations are quite close to the Rwandan border, and Rwanda has shifted troops to meet this perceived threat. In some places, the FDLR and RDF are now reportedly facing each other in close proximity.

18. (C) Comment. We agree with our colleagues in Kinshasa that concerted efforts must be undertaken now to avoid any further escalation of tensions on either side. The Joint Monitoring Group and Tripartite-Plus sessions, jointly scheduled for mid-November in Kigali, will be useful. A revived Joint Verification Mechanism (something the Rwandans have been calling for, for quite some time) could provide an avenue for rational examination of reported incidents. Restoration of diplomatic ties would provide a bilateral avenue of communication that is sorely needed. Like Embassy Kinshasa, Embassy Kigali would welcome colleagues interested in obtaining a first-hand view of the situation from this side of the border. End Comment.

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